

MINUTES

SUFFIELD PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION MONTHLY MEETING AUGUST 13, 2014

The Suffield Parks & Recreation Commission held its regular meeting on Wednesday, August 13, 2014 at the Town Hall, 83 Mountain Road, Suffield, CT., Lower Level Conference Room.

ATTENDANCE:Lou Casinghino, Chairman
.....Cindy Nicholson, Vice Chairman
.....Bill Clark
.....Brian Casinghino
.....Leeayn Burke
.....David Rusnock
.....Amy Egan
.....Gerry Crane

ABSENTKerri Milne, Clerk

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:Wendy J. LaMontagne, Director

Lou called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

PUBLIC INPUT: None

MINUTES: None since the July meeting was canceled.

CORRESPONDENCE: Wendy received a request for the Commission's submission for the Annual Report. She is working on providing the information.

Wendy passed out a document from the Town Clerk soliciting Board member contact information and term expiration dates. Information on the Town database needs to be verified and updated.

PROGRAM REPORTS: Wendy reported that the Summer Sizzler Concert on the Green was a success. The Around the Town Singers and Orchestra performed for 2 hours nonstop. Wendy secured a \$475.00 grant from the Friends of Suffield that helped offset some of their costs as they set up a professional stage, lighting, and sound system. The group volunteered their services for the concert. Wendy reported that between 350- 400 people attended the spectacular concert. She also thanked the Town Emergency Services (Police, ambulance, and fire) and the Building Department for their assistance. It was a great community event.

Wendy reported that the summer camps went well although there were some issues with the summer staff. Some left early without permission and called in sick frequently. Wendy addressed the issue with Human Resources and some of the staff will not be re-hired next year. Wendy noted that the campers enjoyed their counselors and a safe summer was had by all.

OLD BUSINESS:

Department Position: The Commission discussed the 10 hour Registration Clerk position. Wendy has not had confirmation on whether or not the position is now a Union position. It was also noted that the Union grievance is still in process. A lengthy discussion took place about the position and determination of the number of hours the position should work along with the next steps the Commission should take. Brian Casinghino made a motion that a letter be sent from the Commission to the Board of Selectmen indicating that we are seeking articulation and an explanation as to why the Parks & Recreation Secretary position was eliminated and secondly that we would request to appear as a full Commission at the Board of Selectmen's first meeting in September for the purpose of requesting the reinstatement of the secretarial position as a full time position in order to adequately provide administrative support for the Parks and Recreation Commission. The motion was seconded by Cindy Nicholson. Vote was unanimous. Leeayn volunteered to draft the letter and seek feedback from Commission members before sending it to the Board of Selectmen.

Bridge Street School Update: Wendy reported that the consultant John Metzger has conducted interviews with stakeholders and held meetings with a Focus group. She thanked Amy and Leeayn for setting up the interviews and inviting attendees for the Focus group.

The Bridge Street School Ad-hoc committee met last night. Mr. Metzger attended and provided some preliminary information. He noted the need for a full size gym, activities for preschool, tweens, seniors, adult, dance and arts and a park/play scape area. It was suggested that interested citizens form a "Friends of" type formal group as a coalition with fundraising. Cindy and Brian are working on this. Wendy passed around the Preliminary Designs and cost estimates from the architectural firm of Silver Petrucelli. This was received at last night's meeting. Four different options were designed and priced out. Wendy also invited Commission members to meet on August 28th with the Parks and Recreation Consultant John Metzger to begin working on a business plan. She also invited members to join her on a field trip to Old Saybrook on August 26th to see a school building which was converted into a Community Center. Brian Casinghino commented that he was impressed with the drawings and that these plans would offer a good usable space for a wide range of citizens.

Babb's update: Gerry reported that the beach has been cleaned up. CRC has completed their siding project and State Representative Tami Zawistowski visited and was impressed with their work. Gerry also noted that the Town was awarded the \$75,000 grant and would like to begin work as soon as possible. There is an additional \$25,000

available. Gerry has asked Patrick McMahon to set up a meeting to start the project. Wendy passed out the Conceptual Cost Estimate for the Babb's Master Plan. These numbers will be discussed with Public Works, the First Selectman and then be included in the ACCE budget.

NEW BUSINESS:

Soccer: Wendy reported that 252 children have signed up for soccer. Last year there were 264 sign ups. Wendy expects about the same number after late registrations are processed. The department is working on developing the teams and getting the fields organized and more volunteer coaches are needed. She noted that there are 7 signups for grade 5 and higher. Wendy cited other sport options and travel programs could be the reason there is limited interest. This is similar to levels in other nearby towns (Windsor Locks and Granby). The program will probably be canceled for those age groups. Amy suggested that these students be utilized as referees or assistant student coaches.

Road Race: The 5K and 10K Road Race will take place on Saturday, September 6th. Adult volunteers are needed between 7 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. Leeayn volunteered to drive the trail vehicle. Amy is soliciting for donations to be used as raffle prizes and has secured one donation so far.

On-line Registration: Wendy said the Request for Proposal (RFP) has been written and added to the Town website and will be accepted until August 27th. There are two pieces to the project. The first is the software specific to recreation activities and the second is the payment processing. Wendy has had meetings with Finance and IT to discuss the payment process, security, etc. Gerry asked if Paypal was being considered. Wendy is hoping to transition to online registrations over the winter. The payment processing software could be a pilot for other Town functions including dog licenses and payment of taxes.

ADJOURNMENT: Gerry made a motion to adjourn. Lou seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 8:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Trase